

Regulation on the Accreditation of Study Programs (StakV)

Effective July 22, 2016, last amended by the Regulation of July 15, 2025

Pursuant to Section 2 of the Act on the State Treaty on Study Program Accreditation of December 18, 2017 (GVBl. p. 482) in conjunction with Article 4, paragraphs 1 through 4, of the State Treaty on Study Program Accreditation of June 12, 2017, signed from June 1, 2017, through June 20, 2017, the Minister for Science and Research, Art, and Culture hereby enacts the following:

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PART 1 - GENERAL PROVISIONS

§ 1 Scope

(1) This regulation sets forth the details regarding the formal criteria under Art. 2(2), the academic and content-related criteria under Art. 2(3), and the procedure under Art. 3 of the State Treaty on Study Program Accreditation.

(2) Unless otherwise specified in this Regulation, the following provisions on program accreditation also apply to degree programs at state-run and state-recognized vocational academies leading to the degree of Bachelor. A Bachelor's degree accredited under this Regulation is equivalent under higher education law to a Bachelor's degree from a university.

§ 2 Forms of Accreditation

Forms of accreditation are the

1. Procedure pursuant to Article 3(1)(1) of the State Treaty on Study Program Accreditation (system accreditation),
 2. Procedure pursuant to Article 3(1)(2) of the State Treaty on Study Program Accreditation (program accreditation) or
 3. alternative accreditation procedures pursuant to Article 3(1)(3) of the State Treaty on Study Program Accreditation.
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PART 2 - FORMAL CRITERIA FOR DEGREE PROGRAMS

§ 3 Program Structure and Duration, Recognition, and Credit Transfer

(1) In a tiered degree program system, the bachelor's degree is the first standard degree conferring professional qualifications; the master's degree represents a further professional qualification. Undergraduate degree programs leading directly to a master's degree are excluded, with the exception of the programs listed in paragraph 3.

(2) The standard duration of study for a full-time program is six, seven, or eight semesters for bachelor's programs and four, three, or two semesters for master's programs. For bachelor's programs, the standard duration of study for full-time students is at least three years. For consecutive programs, the total standard duration of study for full-time students is five years (ten semesters). Shorter or longer standard periods of study are possible in exceptional cases, provided the program is structured accordingly, in order to enable students to individual learning path, particularly through part-time, distance, part-time while working, or dual study programs, as well as semesters of practical work experience. Notwithstanding the third sentence, consecutive bachelor's and master's degree programs in the core artistic disciplines at universities of the arts and music colleges may also be established with a total standard period of study of six years.

(3) Theological degree programs that qualify students for the office of pastor, the priesthood, or the profession of pastoral assistant (full-time theological studies) need not be tiered and may have a standard period of study of ten semesters.

(4) The institution implements national and state regulations regarding the recognition of competencies, qualifications, and academic achievements earned at a higher education institution, as well as the transfer of competencies and qualifications acquired outside of higher education institutions.

§ 4 Program Profiles

(1) Master's degree programs may be distinguished by an "application-oriented" or "research-oriented" profile. Master's degree programs at colleges of art and music may have a special artistic profile. Master's degree programs in which the Programs that provide the educational prerequisites for a teaching career have a specific teaching-related profile. If the institution establishes such a profile, this must be specified in the accreditation.

(2) When establishing a master's program, it must be specified whether it is a consecutive or continuing education program. Continuing education master's programs correspond to consecutive master's programs in terms of the standard period of study and the thesis, and lead to the same level of qualification and the same entitlements.

(3) Both bachelor's and master's programs require a thesis that demonstrates the ability to independently address a problem within the respective field.

§ 5 Admission Requirements

(1) The admission requirement for a master's program is a first professional degree university degree. Admission to continuing education and artistic Master's programs via an aptitude examination in accordance with the Hessian Higher Education Act remains unaffected by this provision. Continuing education Master's programs require at least one year of qualified professional experience; exceptions may be granted for individual students in justified cases.

(2) As an admission requirement for artistic master's programs, proof of the necessary special artistic aptitude must be provided.

(3) In all other respects, admission to master's degree programs is governed by the Hessian Higher Education Act.

§ 6 Degrees and Degree Titles

(1) Upon successful completion of a Bachelor's or Master's program, only one degree—either the Bachelor's or Master's degree—is awarded, unless it is a multiple-degree program. In this context, degrees are not differentiated based on the standard duration of study.

(2) The following titles are to be used for Bachelor's and consecutive Master's degrees:

1. Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) and Master of Arts (M.A.) in the subject groups of Language and Cultural Studies, Sports, Sports Science, Social Sciences, Art History, Performing Arts, and, where the content is relevant, in the subject group of Economics, as well as in applied arts programs,
2. Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) and Master of Science (M.Sc.) in the subject groups of Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Medicine, Agricultural, Forestry, and

Nutritional Sciences, in the subject groups of Engineering and Economics with a corresponding focus,

3. Bachelor of Engineering (B. Eng.) and Master of Engineering (M. Eng.) in the subject group of engineering sciences, provided the program content is appropriate,
4. Bachelor of Laws (LL.B.) and Master of Laws (LL.M.) in the subject group of Law,
5. Bachelor of Fine Arts (B.F.A.) and Master of Fine Arts (M.F.A.) in the Fine Arts program,
6. Bachelor of Music (B. Mus.) and Master of Music (M. Mus.) in the Music subject group,
7. Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) and Master of Education (M.Ed.) for programs that provide the educational requirements for a teaching career; for a multidisciplinary program, a designation in accordance with Nos. 1 through 7 may be provided depending on the program's content focus.

Subject-specific additions to degree titles and mixed-language degree titles are not permitted. Bachelor's degrees with the suffix "honors" ("B.A. hon.") are not permitted. For interdisciplinary and combined degree programs, the degree title is based on the subject area that predominates in the program. For continuing education programs, master's degrees that differ from the aforementioned titles may also be used. For the full-time Theology full-time theological program, alternative titles may also be used.

(3) The degree documents may specify, in an appropriate section, that the level of the Bachelor's degree corresponds to a Diplom degree from universities of applied sciences, or that the level of the Master's degree corresponds to a Diplom degree from universities or equivalent institutions.

(4) Detailed information regarding the specific program of study underlying the degree is provided in the Diploma Supplement, which is an integral part of every degree certificate.

§ 7 Modularization

(1) Degree programs must be structured into study units (modules) that are thematically and temporally defined by the combination of intended learning outcomes and course content. The intended learning outcomes and course content of a module must be designed so that they can generally be completed within a maximum of two consecutive semesters; in exceptionally justified cases, a module may also extend over more than two semesters. For the core artistic subject in the Bachelor's program, at least two modules are mandatory, which may account for approximately two-thirds of the total study time.

(2) The description of a module shall include at least:

1. Intended learning outcomes and course content of the module,
2. Teaching and learning methods,
3. Requirements for participation,
4. Requirements for the awarding of credits under the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS credits),

5. ECTS credits and grading,
6. Frequency of the module's offering,
7. Workload and
8. Duration of the module.

(3) The prerequisites for participation must specify the knowledge, skills, and abilities required for successful participation, as well as guidance on appropriate preparation by students. The prerequisites for awarding ECTS credits, it must be specified how a module can be successfully completed (types, scope, or duration of examinations).

§ 8 Credit Point System

(1) Each module must be assigned a specific number of ECTS credits based on the workload for students. As a rule, 30 credits are awarded per semester. Credit points shall be used as the basis. One credit point corresponds to a total student workload of 25 to a maximum of 30 hours of in-class and independent study. ECTS credit points are awarded for a module if the student demonstrates the achievements specified in the examination regulations. The awarding of ECTS credit points does not necessarily require an examination, but rather the successful completion of the respective module.

(2) For the Bachelor's degree, no fewer than 180 ECTS credits must be demonstrated. For the Master's degree, 300 ECTS credits are required, taking into account the student's prior studies up to the first professionally qualifying degree. In individual cases, deviations from this requirement may be permitted if the student possesses the appropriate qualifications, even if 300 ECTS credits are not attained upon completion of a Master's program. For consecutive Bachelor's and Master's programs in core artistic disciplines at art and music colleges with a standard duration of six years, the Master's level is achieved with 360 ECTS credits.

(3) The scope of work for the bachelor's thesis is 6 to 12 ECTS credits and for the master's thesis 15 to 30 ECTS credits. In fine arts programs, in justified exceptional cases, the scope of the bachelor's thesis may be up to 20 ECTS credits and that of the master's thesis up to 40 ECTS credits.

(4) In justified exceptional cases, up to 75 ECTS credits per academic year may be applied. In this context, the workload for one ECTS credit is calculated at 30 hours. Special academic organizational measures may pertain in particular to the learning environment and supervision, the structure of the program, academic planning, and measures to ensure the student's livelihood.

(5) For teacher education programs leading to certification for elementary or primary school teaching, for cross-disciplinary teaching positions at the primary level and for all or specific types of secondary schools, for teaching positions at all or specific types of lower secondary schools, as well as for special education teaching positions, a master's degree may be awarded if a total of 300 ECTS credits have been earned, including at least 240 ECTS credits acquired at the university and taking into account the preparatory service.

(6) At vocational academies, a three-year program leading to a bachelor's degree. The scope of the

theory-based training components must not be less than 120 ECTS credits, and the scope of the practice-based training components must not be less than 30 ECTS credits.

§ 9 Special Criteria for Cooperation with Non-Higher Education Institutions

(1) The scope and nature of existing collaborations with companies and other institutions, including non-higher-education learning venues and course components as well as the language or languages of instruction, are contractually regulated and described on the university's website. When applying credit transfer models within the framework of program-related collaborations, the substantive equivalence of non-higher-education qualifications to be transferred and their equivalence to the intended qualification level.

(2) In the case of program-specific collaborations with non-higher-education institutions, the added value for future students and the degree-granting institution is clearly demonstrated.

§ 10 Special Provisions for Joint Programs

(1) A joint program is a multi-level degree program offered by a domestic institution of higher education in collaboration with one or more institutions of higher education in foreign countries from the coordinated and offered within the European Higher Education Area, leading to a joint degree (joint degree) or a double or multiple degree and has the following additional characteristics:

1. an integrated curriculum,
2. a study component at one or more foreign higher education institutions of generally at least 25 percent,
3. contractually regulated cooperation,
4. coordinated admission and examination procedures, and
5. joint quality assurance.

Sections 10, 16, and 33 apply to these degree programs. Compliance with the criteria in paragraph 1, items 1 through 5, shall be verified.

(2) Qualifications and periods of study are recognized in accordance with the Act on the Convention of April 11, 1997, on the Recognition of Qualifications in recognized by the European Higher Education Area on May 16, 2007 (Federal Law Gazette II, p. 712). The ECTS is applied in accordance with Sections 7 and 8(1), and the distribution of credit points is regulated. For the bachelor's degree, 180 to 240 credit points must be demonstrated, and for the master's degree, no fewer than 60 credit points. The essential program information is published and accessible to students at all times. In all other respects, the provisions of Part 2 do not apply.

(3) If a joint program is coordinated and offered by a domestic institution of higher education together with one or more institutions of higher education in foreign countries that do not belong to the European Higher Education Area (non-European cooperation partners), the domestic institution, paragraphs 1 and 2 shall apply mutatis mutandis if the non-European cooperation partners have committed in the cooperation agreement with the domestic

university to undergo accreditation in accordance with the criteria and procedural rules set forth in paragraphs 1 and 2 as well as in § 16(1) and § 33(1).

PART 3 - SUBSTANTIVE CRITERIA FOR DEGREE PROGRAMS AND QUALIFICATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Section 11: Qualification Objectives and Degree Level

(1) The qualification objectives and the intended learning outcomes are clearly formulated, publicly accessible, and take into account in a transparent manner the objectives of higher education set forth in Art. 2, para. 3, no. 1 of the State Treaty on Study Accreditation . Personal development also encompasses the future civic, political, and cultural role of graduates. Upon graduation, students should be able to play a decisive role in shaping social processes in a critical and reflective manner, with a sense of responsibility and democratic civic spirit.

(2) The professional and academic/artistic requirements encompass the aspects of knowledge and understanding (broadening, deepening, and comprehending knowledge), the application, use, and creation of knowledge or art (utilization and transfer, scientific innovation), communication and cooperation, as well as scientific/artistic self-image and professionalism, and are consistent with the level of the degree awarded.

(3) Bachelor's degree programs serve to impart scientific or artistic fundamentals, methodological competence, and profession-specific qualifications, and ensure a broad scientific qualification. Consecutive Master's degree programs are designed as programs that deepen, broaden, or are interdisciplinary or in other fields. Professional Master's programs require qualified professional experience of generally no less than one year. The program design of professional Master's programs takes professional experience into account and links to the qualification objectives. In designing the program, the institution outlines the relationship between professional qualifications and the academic offerings, as well as the equivalence of requirements with consecutive master's programs. Artistic programs foster and further develop the ability for artistic creation.

§ 12 Coherent Program Concept and Adequate Implementation

(1) The curriculum is appropriately structured, taking into account the specified entry requirements and with a view to achieving the qualification objectives. The learning outcomes, the program title, the degree level and designation, and the module structure are consistently aligned with one another. The program design incorporates a variety of teaching, learning, and assessment methods tailored to the respective academic discipline and program format, as well as practical components where appropriate. It creates suitable conditions to promote student mobility, enabling students to spend time at other institutions without losing academic progress. It actively involves students in the design of teaching and learning processes (student-centered teaching and learning) and provides opportunities for self-directed study. The program, course of study, examination requirements, module descriptions, and admission requirements—including provisions for compensating for disadvantages for students with disabilities or chronic illnesses—are documented and published.

(2) The curriculum is implemented by teaching staff with sufficient subject-specific and methodological-didactic qualifications. The integration of research and teaching is ensured, in accordance with the institution's profile, particularly through full-time professors in both undergraduate and graduate programs. The institution takes appropriate measures for staff selection and qualification.

(3) The program also has adequate resources (in particular non-academic staff, facilities, and equipment, including IT infrastructure, teaching and learning materials).

(4) Exams and assessment methods enable a meaningful evaluation of the learning outcomes achieved. They are module-based and competency-oriented.

(5) The feasibility of completing the program within the standard period of study is ensured. This includes, in particular,

1. a predictable and reliable academic schedule,
2. the minimal overlap of courses and exams,
3. a reasonable average workload that is commensurate with the assessment burden, whereby the learning outcomes of a module must be designed so that they can generally be achieved within a semester or a year, as validated by regular surveys, and
4. an adequate and workload-appropriate examination frequency and organization, which is coherently justified in an examination concept and whose appropriateness in relation to the workload is regularly assessed with the involvement of students as part of the further development of the program in accordance with § 14; modules should have a scope of at least five ECTS credits.

(6) Degree programs with a distinct profile have a self-contained program concept that appropriately reflects the specific characteristics of the profile.

(7) A degree program may be designated and advertised as "dual" if the learning locations (at least a university or vocational academy and a company) are systematically interlinked in terms of content, organization, and contractual arrangements.

§ 13 Academic and Content-Related Structure of Degree Programs

(1) The relevance and adequacy of the academic and scientific requirements are guaranteed. The academic content and the methodological and didactic approaches of the curriculum are continuously reviewed and adapted to further developments in the subject area and in pedagogy. To this end, systematic consideration is given to the academic discourse at the national and, where applicable, international level.

(2) In degree programs that provide the educational prerequisites for a teaching career, accreditation is based both on the evaluation of educational sciences and subject-specific disciplines, as well as their didactics, in accordance with state-wide and state-specific subject requirements, and on the state-wide and state-specific structural guidelines for teacher education.

(3) In the context of the accreditation of teacher education programs, particular attention must be paid to whether

1. an integrated course of study at universities or equivalent institutions of higher education comprising at least two subject-specific disciplines and educational sciences in the

bachelor's phase as well as in the master's phase (exceptions are permitted for the subjects of art and music),

2. practical school training already during the Bachelor's program and
3. a differentiation of degree programs and degrees based on teaching specializations

have been made. Exceptions to sentence 1, nos. 1 and 2, are permitted for teaching at vocational schools and for master's programs designed for career changers seeking to teach at vocational schools.

§ 14 Academic Success

The program is subject to continuous monitoring with the participation of students and graduates graduates. On this basis, measures to ensure academic success are derived. These are continuously reviewed, and the results are used for the further development of the program. The parties involved are informed of the results and the measures taken, in compliance with data protection regulations.

§ 15 Diversity, Gender Equality, and Equal Opportunity

The university has policies in place to promote diversity, to Gender equality and the promotion of equal opportunities for students in special circumstances, implemented at the program level.

§ 16 Special Provisions for Joint Programs

(1) For joint programs, § 11 (1) and (2), § 12 (1) sentences 1 through 3, (2) sentence 1, (3) and (4), and § 14 apply mutatis mutandis. Otherwise, the provisions of Part 3 do not apply. In addition, the following applies:

1. the admission requirements and selection procedures shall be appropriate to the level and the academic discipline in which the degree program is situated,
2. it can be demonstrated that the program achieves the intended learning outcomes,
3. where applicable, the requirements of Directive 2005/36/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of September 7, 2005, on the recognition of Professional Qualifications (OJ EU No. L 255, p. 22; No. L 271, p. 18; No. L 93, p. 28; No. L 33, p. 49; No. L 305, p. 115, No. L 177, p. 60, No. L 268, p. 35, No. L 95, p. 20), as last amended by Commission Delegated Decision (EU) 2017/2113 of September 11, 2017 (OJ EU No. L 317, p. 119),
4. In the provision of academic support, the design of the degree program, and the teaching and learning methods employed, the diversity of students and their needs is respected, and the specific requirements of mobile students are taken into account;
5. The university's quality management system ensures the implementation of the above provisions and those specified in § 17.

(2) If a joint program is coordinated and offered by a domestic institution of higher education together with one or more non-European cooperation partners,

paragraph 1 applies mutatis mutandis at the request of the domestic institution if the non-European cooperation partners commit in the cooperation agreement with the domestic institution to accreditation in accordance with the criteria and procedural rules set forth in paragraph 1, § 10(1) and (2), and § 33(1).

§ 17 Concept of the Quality Management System at System-Accredited Universities (Objectives, Processes, Tools)

(1) The institution has established central educational goals for teaching, which are reflected in the institution's mission statement and in the curricula of its degree programs. The quality management system adheres to the values and standards of the mission statement for teaching and aims to continuously improve the quality of education. It ensures the systematic implementation of the requirements specified in Parts 2 and 3. The institution has established decision-making processes, authorities, and responsibilities for the establishment, review, further development, and discontinuation of degree programs, as well as the institution's own procedures for the accreditation of degree programs within the framework of its quality management system and published university-wide. The university shall adopt provisions regarding periods of validity and deadlines in accordance with §§ 26 and 27. In doing so, the university may establish shorter periods of validity and deadlines. If a quality management system provides for the formation of clusters, § 30(1) shall apply mutatis mutandis with respect to cluster sizes.

(2) The quality management system was developed with the participation of the university's constituent groups and with input from external experts. It ensures the independence of quality assessments and includes procedures for handling internal conflicts as well as an internal grievance system. It is based on closed-loop control systems, covers all areas of the university's operations that are directly relevant to academic studies and teaching, and is equipped with adequate and sustainable resource allocation. The university regularly reviews and continuously improves the system's functionality and effectiveness with regard to the quality of studies.

§ 18 Measures for Implementing the Quality Management Concept of System-Accredited Institutions

(1) The quality management system includes regular evaluations of the degree programs and the areas of activity relevant to teaching and studies by students from within and outside the institution, external academic experts, representatives from the professional field, and graduates; the institution may conduct the evaluation of the formal criteria independently. If a need for action is identified, the necessary measures are taken and implemented.

(2) Provided that, on the basis of the institution's quality management system, evaluations of teacher education programs, teacher education programs with the combined subject of Protestant or Catholic Theology or Religion, Protestant theological programs that qualify for the ministry, and other bachelor's and master's programs with the combined subject of Protestant or Catholic Theology, the participation and approval requirements under § 25(1), sentences 3 through 5, shall apply accordingly.

(3) The data required for the implementation of the quality management system is collected university-wide and on a regular basis.

(4) The institution documents the evaluation of its degree programs under its internal quality management system, including the opinions of external stakeholders and the measures taken, and informs the institution's members, its governing body, and the state in which it is located of these findings. For the purpose of informing the public, it makes the accreditation decisions

decisions and a brief summary of the quality assessment for publication. Section 29, sentence 2 applies accordingly.

§ 1G Cooperation with Non-Higher Education Institutions

If a university offers a degree program in cooperation with a non-university institution, the university is responsible for compliance with the requirements set forth in Parts 2 and 3. The degree-granting university may make decisions regarding the content and organization of the curriculum, admission, recognition, and credit transfer, as well as

The university may not delegate authority regarding the setting of examination requirements and the grading of examination performance, the administration of examination and student data, quality assurance procedures, or the criteria and procedures for selecting teaching staff.

§ 20 University-level cooperation

(1) If a university enters into a program-specific cooperation with another institution, the degree-granting institution or institutions shall ensure the implementation and quality of the program concept. The nature and scope of the cooperation shall be described, and the agreements underlying the cooperation shall be documented.

(2) If a system-accredited institution of higher education enters into a program-specific cooperation with another institution of higher education, the system-accredited institution may award the program the seal of the Accreditation Council pursuant to § 22 (4) sentence 2, provided that it is itself a degree-granting institution and ensures the implementation and quality of the program concept

. Paragraph 1, sentence 2 applies accordingly.

(3) In the case of cooperation between institutions of higher education at the level of their quality management systems, system accreditation of each of the participating institutions is required. Upon application by the cooperating institutions, a joint system accreditation procedure is permissible.

§ 21 Special Criteria for Bachelor's Degree Programs at Vocational Academies

(1) Full-time faculty members at vocational academies must meet the hiring requirements under § 5 of the Act on the State Recognition of Vocational Academies of September 15, 2016 (GVBl. p. 162), last amended by the Act of December 14, 2021 (GVBl. p. 931). The proportion of instruction provided by full-time faculty members shall not be less than 40 percent. In exceptional cases, this may also include professors at universities of applied sciences or universities who teach at a vocational academy on a part-time basis, provided that they ensure continuity in the curriculum and consistency in the overall education program, as well as mandatory student supervision and advising; the fulfillment of these requirements must be determined separately as part of the accreditation of the individual degree program.

(2) Paragraph 1, sentence 1 applies mutatis mutandis to part-time faculty members who offer theory-based courses leading to ECTS credits or who participate as examiners in the supervision and evaluation of the bachelor's thesis. Courses under sentence 1 may, in exceptional cases, also be offered by part-time faculty members who hold a relevant university degree or an equivalent qualification, as well as subject-specific and pedagogical competence and several years of relevant

relevant professional experience in accordance with the requirements of the course.

(3) As part of the accreditation process, the following must also be reviewed:

1. the interaction between the different learning locations (study academy and company),
2. ensuring quality and continuity in the curriculum and in the support and advising of students, given the unique staffing structure at vocational academies, and
3. the existence of a sustainable quality management system that encompasses the various learning locations.

PART 4 - PROCEDURAL RULES FOR PROGRAM AND SYSTEM ACCREDITATION

§ 22 Decision of the Accreditation Council, Awarding of the Seal

(1) The Accreditation Council decides on accreditation at the request of the institution by determining compliance with the formal criteria and the academic and content-related criteria pursuant to Article 3(5), sentence 1 of the State Treaty on Study Program Accreditation in conjunction with Parts 2 and 3. The basis for the decision regarding the formal criteria is an audit report pursuant to Article 4(3), sentence 1, no. 2, letter b of the State Treaty on Study Program Accreditation. The basis for the decision regarding the academic and content-related criteria is an expert opinion pursuant to Article 3(2), sentence 1, no. 4 of the State Treaty on Study Program Accreditation.

(2) The decision is issued by electronic notice. It must be substantiated.

(3) The institution shall be given the opportunity to comment prior to the Accreditation Council's decision if the Council intends to deviate significantly from the experts' recommendation. The deadline for submitting comments is one month.

(4) Upon accreditation, the Accreditation Council grants the degree program or the Quality Management System. Upon receiving system accreditation, the institution is granted the right to award the Accreditation Council's seal to the degree programs it has reviewed.

(5) The accreditation of a full-time Catholic theological degree program takes place exclusively in the form of program accreditation. In the case of full-time and part-time theological degree programs, the decision of the Accreditation Council requires the approval of the competent ecclesiastical authorities.

§ 23 Documents to be Submitted

(1) The following documents must be attached to the application:

1. a self-evaluation report from the institution,
2. an accreditation report from an agency accredited by the Accreditation Council, consisting of an audit report and an expert opinion; in the case of institutional accreditation the audit report refers to the evidence specified in Nos. 3 and 4,
3. in the case of an application for system accreditation, additionally proof that at least one degree program has undergone the quality management system,
4. in the case of an application for system reaccreditation, evidence that, in principle, all bachelor's and master's degree programs have gone through the quality management system at least once

(2) For the documents referred to in paragraph 1, No. 2, translations into German must be submitted if they are not written in German.

(3) As soon as the Accreditation Council makes an electronic data processing system available, it must be used.

§ 24 Appointment of an agency, accreditation report, site visit

(1) The university commissions an agency accredited by the Accreditation Council pursuant to Article 5(3)(5) of the State Treaty on Study Program Accreditation to assess the formal and subject-specific criteria and to prepare an accreditation report. For a full-time Catholic theology program, the assessment is conducted by the Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Canonical Degree Programs in Germany, which is accredited by the Accreditation Council.

(2) The institution shall provide the agency with a self-evaluation report containing, at a minimum, information on the institution's quality objectives and on the formal and subject-specific criteria set forth in Parts 2 and 3. The institution's self-evaluation report, in the preparation of which the student council must be involved, shall not exceed 20 pages for program accreditation and 50 pages for system and cluster accreditation.

(3) The review report is prepared by the Agency; for degree programs pursuant to § 25(1), sentences 3 and 4, the review report requires the approval of the Accreditation Council before being forwarded to it.

the designated persons in each case. The relevant standards for the audit report are the formal criteria set forth in Part 2. It includes a recommendation regarding compliance with the formal criteria. The audit report must be prepared using the template to be provided by the Accreditation Council . The institution must be informed immediately of any failure to meet a formal criterion.

(4) The expert opinion is issued by the expert panel pursuant to § 25. The expert panel receives the review report pursuant to paragraph 3. The relevant standards for the expert opinion are the subject-matter and content criteria set forth in Part 3. It contains a recommendation regarding compliance with the subject-matter and content criteria. The expert opinion must be drafted using the template to be specified by the Accreditation Council and shall not exceed 20 pages for program accreditation and 100 pages for system and cluster accreditation.

(5) As part of the evaluation of the subject-specific and content-related criteria, the review panel generally conducts an on-site visit. In the case of the accreditation of a degree program that is not yet offered at the time the agency is commissioned (concept accreditation), the review panel may, by mutual agreement, waive the on-site visit . The same applies to the reaccreditation of a degree program.

(6) If the report contains recommendations regarding conditions, the institution and the agency may agree on an additional procedural step to resolve the issue with Monita before submitting the application to the Accreditation Council.

§ 25 Composition of the Review Panel, Requirements for Reviewers

(1) The review panel of the agencies shall consist of at least four persons in the case of program accreditation. It shall be composed as follows:

1. at least two university faculty members with expertise in the relevant field,
2. one representative from professional practice with expertise in the relevant field,
3. one student with expertise in the relevant field.

In the accreditation of degree programs that qualify students for admission to the preparatory service for a teaching career, a representative of the ministry responsible for the school system shall take the place of the person referred to in sentence 2, no. 2; for teacher training programs that include the combined subject of Protestant or Catholic theology or religion, a representative of the locally responsible diocese or regional church shall also be included. In the accreditation of full-time theological degree programs and in all other bachelor's and master's degree programs that include the combination subject of Protestant or Catholic Theology or Religion, a representative of the competent church authority shall take the place of the person referred to in sentence 2, no. 2. For the degree programs mentioned in sentences 3 and 4, the submission of the expert opinion pursuant to § 24 (4), sentence 1, requires the consent of the persons named in each instance; without this consent, the expert opinion shall not be submitted to the Accreditation Council.

(2) The agencies' review panel for system accreditation consists of at least five members. It is composed as follows:

1. at least three university faculty members with relevant experience in quality assurance in the field of teaching,
2. a representative from the professional field,
3. one student.

(3) The university professors hold the majority of the votes. In the respective panel of experts, the majority of the experts must have experience with accreditations. In the case of system accreditation, the majority of the experts must have experience with system accreditations.

(4) The reviewers are appointed by the agency commissioned to prepare the accreditation report. In making these appointments, the agency is bound by the procedure to be developed by the German Rectors' Conference pursuant to Art. 3, para. 3, sentence 3 of the State Treaty on Study Program Accreditation.

(5) The following persons are excluded from serving as assessors:

1. is employed by or enrolled at the institution submitting the application for accreditation,
2. is employed by or enrolled at one of the institutions participating in cooperative degree programs or joint programs, or
3. is considered biased according to the rules customary in academia.

(6) The Agency shall inform the institution of higher education of the composition of the review panel prior to the appointment of the reviewers. The institution of higher education has the right to submit comments within a period of two weeks.

§ 26 Validity Period of Accreditation, Extension

(1) The initial accreditation is valid for a period of eight years from the start of the semester or trimester in which the accreditation decision is announced. If, in the case of program accreditation, the degree program has not yet been launched, the accreditation takes effect from the start of the semester or trimester in which the degree program is first offered, but no later than the start of the second semester or trimester following the announcement of the accreditation decision.

(2) Before the expiration of the accreditation period, an application for reaccreditation must be submitted, which, if successful, follows immediately after the previous accreditation. If the application is submitted in a timely manner in this sense, the accreditation is extended for the duration of the administrative procedure. Reaccreditation takes effect no later than the start of the second

. Reaccreditations are valid for a period of eight years.

(3) The validity period of the accreditation may be extended for a total period of up to two years if

1. in the case of program accreditation, the institution is preparing an application for cluster or system accreditation that includes the respective degree program, or
2. the institution applies for an extension in justified exceptional cases that are wholly or partly beyond the institution's control; the extraordinary extension in individual cases will be credited toward the next accreditation period.

If an application for system accreditation has been submitted, the accreditation of degree programs whose accreditation expires during the proceedings may be extended for the duration of the proceedings plus one year. If an accredited degree program is discontinued, the accreditation may be extended for students still enrolled at the time the accreditation period expires.

§ 27 Conditions

- (1) A deadline of generally twelve months shall be set for the fulfillment of a condition.
- (2) In justified exceptional cases, the deadline may be extended upon request by the institution.
- (3) Proof of compliance with this requirement must be provided to the Accreditation Council.

§ 28 Obligation to Report Changes

- (1) The institution is required to immediately notify the Accreditation Council of any significant change to the subject of accreditation during the period of validity of the accreditation.
- (2) The Accreditation Council shall decide whether the significant change is covered by the existing accreditation.

§ 2G Publication

The Accreditation Council's decision and the accreditation report shall be published by the Accreditation Council on its website. Personal data may not be disclosed in the publication unless the data subject has consented or obtaining the data subject's consent is not possible or would require disproportionate effort, and it is evident that the disclosure is in the data subject's interest.

Section 30: Cluster Accreditation, Sub-System Accreditation

(1) The report of the review panel pursuant to § 24(4) may cover multiple degree programs if they share a high degree of disciplinary affinity that goes beyond mere affiliation with a disciplinary field (humanities and cultural studies, social sciences, or natural sciences) (bundle accreditation). The academic and content-related criteria under Part 3 must be assessed separately for each degree program. A bundle shall consist of no more than ten degree programs.

(2) Bundles with more than four degree programs must be approved by the Accreditation Council prior to submission of the application. This applies to combined degree programs regardless of the size of the bundle.

(3) In exceptional cases, a subunit of the institution responsible for academic organization may be the subject of system accreditation. This may be the case in particular if

1. accreditation of the quality management system for the entire institution is not yet appropriate or feasible,
2. the quality management system of the subunit is integrated into the institution, and
3. at least one student from this department has already completed the program.

§ 31 Random Sampling

(1) In the case of system accreditation and partial system accreditation, the review panel shall conduct a random sample in accordance with § 25(2). The random sample shall verify whether the intended effects of the quality management system under review are being achieved at the level of the degree program.

(2) The subject of the random sample is

1. the consideration of all criteria under Parts 2 and 3 within a degree program that has undergone the institution's quality management system, and
2. the consideration of formal and subject-specific criteria in accordance with Parts 2 and 3, as determined by the review panel.

When selecting the sample, the review panel takes into account the university's range of disciplines in its teaching.

(3) If the institution offers degree programs that also prepare students for a regulated profession, one such program must additionally be included in the sample, taking into account the criteria in Parts 2 and 3 that pertain to degree programs; the same applies in the case from teacher education programs, including one program for each type of teaching certification offered, as well as programs in Protestant or Catholic theology or religion. The sample includes one representative appointed by the authority responsible for the respective regulated profession, or a representative appointed by the authority responsible for the respective regulated profession, or a representative of the ministry or the respective church authority.

PART 5 PROCEDURAL RULES FOR SPECIAL TYPES OF DEGREE PROGRAMS

§ 32 Combined Degree Programs

- (1) If students select individual subjects from a larger number of subjects permitted for the program, each of these subjects constitutes a sub-program as part of a combined degree program.
- (2) The subject of accreditation is the combined degree program. The institutions ensure through their respective quality management systems that the feasibility of study pursuant to § 12(5) is met in all possible subject combinations.
- (3) The accreditation of a combined degree program may be supplemented by the inclusion of additional elective sub-programs or fields of study. This does not affect the accreditation period for the combined degree program.
- (4) The accreditation certificate shall list all sub-programs or subjects included in the accreditation. In the event of an addition to the accreditation pursuant to paragraph 3, a new accreditation certificate shall be issued.
- (5) In all other respects, Part 4 remains unaffected.

§ 33 Joint Programs

(1) For joint programs involving a domestic institution of higher education and other institutions from the European Higher Education Area, the accreditation decision may, in deviation from § 22(1), be made by recognizing the evaluation conducted by an agency listed in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR). The Accreditation Council recognizes this evaluation upon application by the institution and affixes its seal if compliance with the formal and academic criteria for joint programs pursuant to §§ 10 and 16 of this Regulation has been demonstrated and the evaluation process has met the following requirements:

1. The Accreditation Council was notified of the initiation of the procedure prior to its commencement,
2. the accreditation decision is based on a self-report by the cooperating institutions, which in particular contains information on the respective national framework conditions and highlights the specific characteristics of the joint program,
3. an on-site visit has taken place at at least one location of the program with the participation of representatives from all cooperating institutions as well as other stakeholders,
4. the evaluation is based on an expert report that complies with the requirements for joint programs in Parts 2 and 3,
5. the evaluation was conducted by a panel of at least four experts, composed as follows:
 - a) Members from at least two of the countries participating in the Joint Programme,
 - b) at least one student representative,
 - c) the panel of experts represents expertise in the relevant subjects and disciplines, including the labor market/working world in the relevant fields, and expertise in the area of quality assurance

in higher education and possesses knowledge of the higher education systems of the participating institutions as well as the languages of instruction used, and

- d) the requirements pursuant to Section 25(3), first sentence, and (5) and (6) have been met,
- 6. the evaluation identifies the following characteristics: justification, finality, and, where applicable, demonstrated fulfillment of conditions, and
- 7. the agency has published at least a summary of the report, including the evaluation and justification, on its website in English.

Section 22(2), (3), and (4), first sentence; Section 26(1), first sentence, and (2), first sentence; and Sections 28 and 29 apply *mutatis mutandis*. If the accreditation decision is not made within the meaning of sentence 1 in deviation from § 22, the provisions of §§ 10 and 16 for joint programs within the meaning of § 10 (1) shall nevertheless apply *mutatis mutandis*. Notwithstanding § 26(1), first sentence, and (2), second sentence, the accreditation period shall be six years. Upon publication, the decision shall be identified as an accreditation decision based on the separate procedure for joint programs. The institution must clearly indicate this in the degree documents.

(2) If a joint program is coordinated and offered by a domestic institution of higher education together with one or more non-European cooperation partners, paragraph 1 shall apply *mutatis mutandis* upon application by the domestic institution of higher education, provided that the Non-European cooperation partners are required, under the cooperation agreement with the domestic higher education institution, to undergo accreditation in accordance with the criteria set forth in paragraph 1, § 10(1) and (2), and § 16(1).

**PART 6 ALTERNATIVE ACCREDITATION PROCEDURES PURSUANT TO ART. 3, PAR. 1,
NO. 3 OF THE STATE TREATY ON STUDY PROGRAM ACCREDITATION****§ 34 Alternative Accreditation Procedures**

(1) In addition to the two procedures regulated in Part 4, alternative procedures for ensuring and developing quality in studies and teaching may also be employed pursuant to Art. 3, para. 1, no. 3 of the State Treaty on Study Accreditation.

(2) In alternative procedures, the criteria set forth in Parts 2 and 3 must be observed. The provisions in Art. 3(2), sentence 1 of the State Treaty on Study Accreditation as well as those in the

The principles for appropriate academic involvement set forth in the State Treaty on Academic Accreditation and in this regulation apply *mutatis mutandis*; the requirements for participation and consent under Section 18(2) apply accordingly.

(3) The implementation of alternative procedures requires the prior approval of the Accreditation Council and the ministry responsible for higher education; the Accreditation Council may arrange for an external review. The application must be submitted to the Accreditation Council via the ministry responsible for higher education. In consultation with the state, the Accreditation Council may refuse its approval only if the alternative procedure does not comply with the provisions of Art. 2 and 3(2), first sentence, of the State Treaty on Study Program Accreditation, as well as the principles for appropriate academic participation set forth in the State Treaty on Study Program Accreditation and in this regulation. The alternative procedure shall be suitable for gaining fundamental insights into alternative approaches to external quality assurance beyond the procedures specified in Article 3(1)(1) and (2) of the State Treaty on Study Program Accreditation.

(4) The Accreditation Council shall develop rules of procedure that regulate, in particular, the requirements for applications.

(5) The alternative procedure is limited to a maximum of eight years. Section 22(4), sentence 2, and Section 26(3), sentence 2, apply *mutatis mutandis*. It is overseen by the Accreditation Council and must generally be evaluated by an independent, research-oriented institution two years before the end of the project period.

PART 7 MISCELLANEOUS

Section 35 Eligibility under Professional Licensing Law

(1) Accreditation procedures pursuant to Art. 3(1)(1) and (2) of the State Treaty on Study Program Accreditation may, upon application by the institution of higher education, be combined with procedures that determine the eligibility of a degree program under professional licensing law.

(2) The participation of external experts, to be appointed in addition to the other representatives or representatives from the professional field, in an advisory capacity on the expert committees pursuant to § 25 (1) and (2) shall be effected through nomination by the state authority responsible for the respective regulated profession.

Section 36 Evaluation

This Regulation shall be reviewed regularly and within a reasonable period of time.

Section 37 Transitional Provisions

(1) In the case of Section 12(5), sentence 2, no. 4, where a condition within the meaning of Section 27 is to be imposed pursuant to the version of this Regulation in effect until July 31, 2025, the Accreditation Council may, if the available information is insufficient, require as a condition that the appropriateness of the workload be demonstrated within the framework of the examination concept.

(2) For applications submitted by March 31, 2026, § 11(1), sentence 1, § 12(1), sentence 6, Sections 15 and 17(1), sentences 5, 6, and 7, and Section 30(2) of the Regulation in the version applicable until July 31, 2025, shall continue to apply. For applications submitted after March 31, 2026, this Regulation shall apply in the version effective as of August 1, 2025.

Section 38 Entry into Force

This regulation shall enter into force on January 1, 2018.